

patriarch of Constantinople, on the papacy and by attacks of the legates of Pope LEO IX on the patriarchate. This resulted in mutual excommunication (1054). After ZOE's death in (1050), CONSTANTINE IX continued to rule jointly with THEODORA; he died in 1055 and THEODORA in 1056; MICHAEL VI, a Byzantine nobleman was chosen her successor, was forced to abdicate in 1057 in favor of ISAAC I, founder of the COMNENUS dynasty.

1028 - 1050 EMPRESS

ZOE

Born c. 978 - 1050 died

Byzantine Empress (1028-1050), daughter and successor of CONSTANTINE VIII. Her first husband and Associate in power, ROMANUS III, was murdered (1034), probably by ZOE and her lover MICHAEL. She married MICHAEL (who thus became emperor MICHAEL IV) on the same day. He proved a capable ruler and eliminated ZOE from state affairs. Much of the government was exercised by his

elder brother John, a eunuch of the court, and a thoroughly corrupt man, but an able administrator and diplomat. On MICHAEL's death (1041), his nephew, MICHAEL V, became joint ruler with ZOE. He promptly sent his uncle John into disgrace and in 1042 exiled ZOE to a convent, but the people rose in rebellion. ZOE was recalled, and MICHAEL V was blinded and vanished. At the same time ZOE's younger sister, THEODORA, was crowned joint empress. A few months later (June, 1042), ZOE married CONSTANTINE IX, of a distinguished Byzantine family, who ruled jointly with the two sisters until ZOE's death. Under their threefold rule, the Byzantine Court was a source of scandal and of intellectual brilliance. The chief event of the period was the final schism between the Eastern Church and the Western Church, brought about by the attacks of MICHAEL CERULARIUS

Western Druse sect is founded
by Caliph al-Hakim.